

June 2026 LFK Newsletter

“My Trip to Africa”

In May and June, I traveled to Africa, visiting Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, where I met with people to discuss expanding our mission, visited schools, and attended Rotary meetings.

The journey started in Kigali, Rwanda. The night I arrived, thanks to my Guide, Denis Kahungu, I met with Rotarians Paul Masterjab and Faddy Kafaridah. Paul got so excited about our mission that at 8 PM, he called the Director of the Kigali Public Library and insisted that she meet with me first thing Monday morning. This library was built by the Kigali Rotary Club for \$6 million. It took 12 years, and they got no grants from Rotary International. They said it was the largest project in the World by a Rotary Club. On Monday morning, I met with Director Tessy Rusera and Deputy Director Clarisse Uwamahoro. The library has a ground floor that can receive containers. The Rotary club supplies volunteers to unload the container and sort the books. Paul would help us assemble a team to get books delivered. Rwanda is about the size of Massachusetts and has a lot of rural schools that are hungry for books.



I then traveled across Uganda to the town of Mbale. Uganda is about the size of Oregon. I met with our team leader, David Mbango, and his team. David is doing a great job of getting books to rural schools. We visited Bubirabi Primary School, had lunch at David’s house, and met his family and his new baby.



Next, I went to Bungoma, Kenya, where I met with Davidson Akhonya. Davidson came to Nairobi last year to meet me. He is very anxious to get books into rural schools in the Bungoma area. We visited Chepsitati Primary and Secondary school, where the children danced and sang for us, including a Scottish jig.





After visiting the school, I attended Davidson's Rotary Club meeting. There were 5 members there in person, and 12 more joined the meeting virtually. They are all very anxious for us to bring books, and they would like to be a part of our Rotary International Grant project. Wanjiku advised that Bungoma County is next on her list to get books.

As we drove around Kenya, we visited a lot of rural public schools, and we brought them books.



At Olmoti Comprehensive School, we were greeted by Anna Tayiai. Anna is the teacher who inspired the idea for Libraries For Kids International. When I first met her, she was a teacher at Amboseli Primary School. Since then, she has been transferred to different schools and is now the Deputy Head Teacher at Olmoti. Effective July 1, 2026, she is being promoted to Head Teacher.

I also visited our warehouse in Kitui, Kenya, and met with our Operations Coordinator, Wanjiku Francis, and her team. Our Board member, Ng'ang'a Wanjohi, traveled from Nairobi to meet with me and discuss future plans for Kenya.



Ng'ang'a and Wanjiku



Warehouse



The next stop on the itinerary was Tanzania. We are hoping to get permission from the Tanzania Ministry of Education to bring books to rural schools in Tanzania. I visited a couple of schools, and of course, they wanted books. At Kisiwani School in the town of Same, we met with Pascal Mchomvu, who is the education director for the Same District. He was enthusiastic about us bringing books into the 6 schools in his District.

In the town of Karatu, we visited Bashay Primary School at the invitation of Lightness Isojick. We received a warm welcome and a plea for books.



Lightness Isojick (white sweater) invited me to attend a meeting of the Karatu Rotary Club. She is the Club President. This is a small club with only 10 members. We had a great time laughing constantly for 2 hours. While they are a small club, they are growing and enthusiastic about education and our mission to bring books to Tanzania. Three of the people in this picture are teachers.

At the invitation of Arusha Rotarian Patrick Irvin, I also visited a school in the suburbs of Arusha Tanzania that his non-profit, Selfless Solutions, works with. They provide scholarships for children whose parents can not afford the school fees.



I attended the Clocktower Rotary Club of Arusha. I had visited them a year ago and was pleased that their club is growing with some people attending meetings in person and some attending virtually. They pledged to help us get books into Tanzania.



My trip leader, Witness Emmanuel, put me in touch with John Ngowi with the Tanzania Ministry of Education. We had a very encouraging phone conversation, and he is sympathetic to our bringing books to Tanzania. Witness is going to get him some books from our Kenya warehouse so he can see the type of books we supply. When I got home, I sent him some information so he could better understand what Libraries For Kids International does.

Two of our strongest and most enthusiastic supporters are our Ambassadors: Witness Emmanuel, our trip leader, and Sande Willis, our driver in Kenya. They are telling their tourists about us. Sweetwater Primary School's motto is Aim High. In this picture, Sande and I are pointing at the top of Mt Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa. We titled this photo: "Aim High."



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